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ABSTRACT

This compilation pulls together the most recent resources concerning students at risk, summarizing and displaying a number of sources dealing with this issue. The articles represent two major areas: (1) policy and studies and (2) programs and projects. This information includes summaries of studies done at a national level as well as programs developed in New York State. Profiles of the student at risk, labor market concerns, and sociological issues are included. Possible solutions are developed by the Board of Regents in their statements of policy and prevention. Innovative projects are described at both state and national levels. National centers are described, and New York State programs and efforts are highlighted. In addition, a number of resources are cited: a bibliography, a listing of ERIC resources, and a listing of state and national sources that may be contacted. (Information for this report was extracted from issues of "The Benchmark," a bimonthly report on occupational and continuing education in New York State.) (KC)

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Students At-Risk:

An Occupational Education Perspective

A Compilation of Information Relating to Students At Risk

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Students At-Risk:

An Occupational Education Perspective

A Compilation of Information
Relating to Students At-Risk

Fall 1989

The University of the State of New York
The State Education Department
Office of General and Occupational Education
Division of Occupational Education Program Services
Albany, N.Y.

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Contents

Introduction 1

Regents Policy 2

Policy and Studies..... 3

Programs and Projects 13

Dropout Prevention Sources 23

Bibliography 25

Introduction

The problem of students at-risk concerns State and Federal policymakers. The effects of dropping out can be felt throughout all levels of our society. Many of these at-risk students have been placed in vocational education classes and succeeded. Yet, there are many who have not. Who are these students, and what is the far-reaching effect of their dropping out? What can be done to get these young adults on the right track? Occupational education is directly involved with this issue, and has developed a number of exemplary programs which have proven to be successful in the area of dropout prevention.

The Office of General and Occupational Education believes in the sharing of information about occupational education. The following compilation pulls together our most recent resources concerning students at-risk. The purpose of this report is to summarize and display a number of sources dealing with the issue of students at-risk. The articles represent two major areas: policy and studies, and programs and projects. This information includes summaries of studies done at a national level as well as programs developed in New York State.

Profiles of the student at-risk, labor market concerns, and sociological issues are included. Possible solutions are developed by the Board of Regents in their statements of policy and prevention. Innovative projects are described at both State and national levels. National Centers are described, and New York State programs and efforts are highlighted.

In addition, a number of resources are cited: a bibliography, a listing of ERIC resources, and a listing of State and national sources which may be contacted. This compilation of sources will be especially useful to the reader and to policymakers who are attempting to develop a network within our State, and with national sources who are also taking a lead role in dropout prevention efforts.

Students At-Risk has been a regular feature in The Benchmark since September 1987. The Benchmark, a bimonthly report on occupational and continuing education in New York State, has developed a greater awareness of the issue in both general and specific ways. This report, "Students At-Risk: An Occupational Education Perspective," consists of information extracted from that feature in previous issues of The Benchmark.

It is hoped that this compilation of information will result in greater awareness of the issue and of dropout prevention efforts, both in general, and in specific areas. Occupational education will play a major role in providing clarification and understanding of this issue, and in providing a structure for developing a solution to the problem.

Regents Policy

At its July meeting, the Board of Regents approved a policy paper on educating children and youth placed at-risk. The policy paper includes recommended actions to be accomplished within the next five years for the following policies:

Existing resources will be better coordinated and used for youth placed at-risk.

At least 50 percent of any new State resources for elementary and secondary education will be targeted towards enabling schools to meet the needs of youth placed at-risk.

Educational programs, services, and staff must respect and represent the cultural, racial, social, economic, and language. Schools, school districts, students, and the State Education Department will be held accountable at the level of their responsibility for the achievement of youth placed at-risk.

The Regents will pursue the recommended actions through their legislative program, their State Aid to the Schools proposal, and State Operating and local assistance funds requested as part of the Department's budget.

While it is not suggested that the Policy Paper on Educating Children and Youth Placed At-Risk will lead to the resolution of all issues that affect each individual placed at-risk, it is intended to be a major step in addressing the needs of the majority of these children and youth. The central theme of the Paper is that all students shall complete a quality secondary school program and successfully assume roles as self-sufficient adults in society. We must ensure that no performance gap exists between any subgroups, especially between those of high and low socioeconomic status and between those of different ethnic backgrounds, which may be attributable to the instructional program, instructors, or lack of support services. The Board of Regents maintains that equity and excellence must guide the mission of the schools in New York State for all pupils.

Policy and Studies

✔ ***Who Drops Out?*** — The Center for Education Statistics announced the release of a new report, "Who Drops Out of High School: Findings from High School and Beyond." The report was produced by Stephen M. Barro of SMB Economic Research, Inc. and is based on analyses of the Center's longitudinal study of 1980 high school sophomores.

This report looks at the influences of personal and family backgrounds, economic and location factors, school characteristics, educational experiences, certain student behaviors, and the decisions to leave high school before graduation. It also gives special attention to intergroup differences, attempting to sort out the factors responsible for disparities in dropout rates between males and females and among whites, blacks, and Hispanics.

The report includes comparisons with dropout rate estimates from other sources, including "The Condition of Education, 1986." Report highlights include:

- About 13.6 percent of the public and private school students enrolled as high school sophomores in spring 1980 were neither high school graduates nor enrolled in high school in spring 1982, and so were classifiable as dropouts. For public school students, it was 14.4 percent.
- In public and private schools combined, the dropout rate is higher for males (14.6 percent) than for females (12.6 percent), and it varies dramatically among racial/ethnic groups. The dropout rate for whites is 12.2 percent; blacks, 16.8 percent; Hispanics, 18.7 percent; and American Indians, 22.7 percent.
- Students who come from one-parent households and large families, whose parents are in low-level jobs, or whose parents are relatively uneducated (especially parents who are high school dropouts themselves) are three to five times more at-risk of not completing high school than students from advantaged backgrounds.
- The probability of dropping out is four times as great for married as for unmarried females (six times as great if there are children) and twice as great for married as for unmarried males (four times as great with children).

Copies of the report (stock number 065-000-00299-0) are available for $3.50 from the Superintendent of Documents/U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO)/ Washington, DC 20402.

✔ ***Social/Economic Costs*** — According to an American Vocational Association (AVA) report, titled "The Federal

Responsibility for Vocational Education," nearly 30 percent — about one million — of America's students never complete high school. Without some type of intervention, such as a high quality vocational program, another 300,000 students are "at-risk" of dropping out.

Further, the report states that dropouts will each add about $26,000, over their worklives, to future social costs. In total, dropouts will earn $237 billion less in wages during their lifetimes, compared to high school graduates. Those reduced salaries will cause a loss of $71 billion in taxes to local and state governments. Meanwhile, dropouts raise the welfare and unemployment bill by $3 billion annually and crime-related costs by another $3 billion.

Urban areas, such as New York City and Chicago, where the dropout rates are 38 percent and 43 percent respectively, are hit the hardest. Chicago estimates the social costs of the dropout problem to be $451 million per graduating class.

Studies show that for every $1 invested in vocational education, $12.49 is saved in future social costs — most of which can be linked to the relationship between graduation and employment. Less than a half-percent of the vocational graduates who don't seek postsecondary education remain jobless, while nearly 17 percent of the dropouts suffer chronic unemployment.

The report notes that vocational education can be a viable alternative to dropping out — particularly for black and Hispanic males who have twice the dropout rate of whites. This fact will be increasingly important as minority students become the majority in four states and the 27 largest school districts by the year 2000. (The report does not specify the states and school districts.)

Further, the report says, vocational education works to attack illiteracy, drug abuse, teen pregnancy, and other national concerns by teaching basic skills, developing self-discipline, and providing guidance in student organizations. Vocational education also successfully delivers rehabilitation programs to the incarcerated and generally serves a wide range of populations which most need help.

✔ ***Resources Needed*** — Preliminary findings from the U.S. General Accounting Office study show that administrators of school- and community-based dropout prevention programs believe that their programs improve attitudes and academic success. But, they say, they need more resources, specifically for smaller classes, better equipment, and more job training and work experience opportunities. In addition, there is a need for child care arrangements and health clinics for potential and actual dropouts.

✔ ***National Center Studies*** — Two studies on at-risk students, by the National Center for Research in Vocational Education, are expected to be ready by mid-1988. These studies will be based on the proven fact that vocational education has "holding power" for at-risk youth.

The first study, conducted by research specialist Robert Bhaerman, is a project which will develop materials for middle and junior high school students as well as teachers, counselors, and principals. The student materials will focus on attitudes, habits, and behaviors that affect student retention. A videocassette will be developed that will identify "risk points" in students' lives and the various options students have at those points. The materials for educators will be designed to stimulate dialogue among school staff, to assist them in designing an action plan for helping young adolescents stay in school.

The second study, conducted by research specialist Michael Crowe, will provide the connection between research and practice in retaining potential high school dropouts. Guides for teachers, administrators, and students will be produced, and key issues and effective dropout prevention strategies will be highlighted, in videotape format.

Crowe believes that, because this study deals with a very complex problem, there is not going to be a single answer. The purpose of the study is to provide a number of good options to increase the holding power of the schools through vocational education. Solutions, he believes, will be developed locally, based on local resources.

✔ ***Dropout Data*** - Facts and figures concerning school dropouts have been compiled by the U.S. General Accounting Office in a briefing report titled "School Dropouts: The Extent and Nature of the Problem." Some of them are:

- Current Population Survey (CPS) data shows that in October 1985 there were about 4.3 million dropouts, age 16-24, of which 3.5 million were white, about 700,000 were black, about 100,000 were other races. Fourteen percent of youth age 18-19 were dropouts — 16 percent of young men and 12 percent of young women.
- Data from the National Longitudinal Survey of Labor Market Experience includes a nationally representative sample of over 12,999 young men and women who were 14-21 years of age during the period 1979-82. About 15 percent of whites, 17 percent of blacks, and 31 percent of Hispanics failed to complete high school or attain a GED certificate. For older youth (above age 21) the dropout rates for whites, blacks, and Hispanics were 12 percent, 23 percent, and 36 percent, respectively.
- One study that conducted an analysis of the correlates of dropping out showed the following to be important: being two or more years behind grade level, being pregnant, coming from a household where the mother or father was not in the home when the youth was age 14,

coming from a household where the father dropped out of school, and having relatively little knowledge of the labor market.

- According to CPS data for October 1985, about 1 in 4 dropouts aged 16-24 were unemployed, compared to about 1 in 10 high school graduates who were not enrolled in school. In October 1985, only 68 percent of the dropouts in the 16-24 age group were in the labor force, compared to 87 percent of the graduates not enrolled in school.
- Eighty-six percent of the male dropouts age 16-24 were in the labor force in October 1985, of whom 25 percent were unemployed. In contrast, 94 percent of the male graduates were in the labor force, and about ten percent unemployed.
- About half of the women dropouts were in the labor force in October, compared to four-fifths of the graduates. The unemployment rate of dropouts was 30 percent; for graduates, 11 percent.
- Black dropouts were far less likely to be in the labor force than their white counterparts, and had much higher unemployment rates. In October 1985, 53 percent of black dropouts age 16-24 were in the labor force, about 40 percent of whom were unemployed. For the white dropouts, 71 percent were in the labor force and about 25 percent were unemployed.

Up to five copies of "School Dropouts: The Extent and Nature of the Problem" may be obtained without charge from the U.S. General Accounting Office/Box 6016/ Gaithersburg, MD/20877.

✔ ***Female Dropouts*** — The National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE) recently released a report titled "Female Dropouts: A New Perspective." The report challenges the stereotypes that males are more likely to drop out and that females do so only because of pregnancy. In fact, NASBE discovered that boys and girls drop out of school at about the same rate, and 60 percent of the girls who drop out are not pregnant.

Characteristics associated with dropping out — poverty, minority status, urban settings, and undereducated parents — apply equally to girls and boys. But the report points to several social and academic influences that make girls in high-risk categories especially vulnerable to the low self-esteem and poor academic performance that led to dropping out.

For more information on "Female Dropouts: A New Perspective," contact NASBE/701 N. Fairfax Street/Suite 340/Alexandria, VA 22314/(703) 683-4000.

✔ ***Regents Paper*** — The Regents have given preliminary approval to the following strategies for increasing high school completion rates.

1. Local diploma programs after regular school hours — Programs and services must be adjusted to meet student needs. Accordingly, all public schools should make local diploma and high school equivalency programs available to students under age 21 outside of the regular school day. The programs would enable working students to continue with their education.
2. Reporting to parents on remedial study — Schools should be required to report to parents, at least every three months, on the performance of each student receiving remedial instruction. This would encourage parental participation and enable parents to monitor their children's progress.
3. Programs and services for adolescent parents — The increase in teenage pregnancies is one factor which has contributed to an increase in the number of students dropping out of school. Therefore, all schools should be required to provide special programs for adolescent parents which would enable them to continue attending school. State aid should be paid for day care and other supportive services for adolescent parents.
4. Required school follow-through on all students who leave prior to graduation — Greater outreach is needed to encourage drop-outs to return to school. Schools have a responsibility to seek out students who have left before graduating. Schools should be responsible for maintaining a roster of students not in school, seeking to contact these students on a regular basis, and developing an appropriate program of study for returning students.
5. Leaves of absence for students under certain conditions — Because students are frequently faced with outside pressures which force them to leave school, they should be allowed to interrupt their schooling for a limited period of time without terminating it. This would encourage students to complete their education.

   Under the Regents plan, students would be eligible for leaves of up to ten months during their high school career. Students on leave could be working full-time, caring for their own children, providing services in nonprofit organizations, working out family problems, receiving medical or other assistance from approved agencies, or be involved in some form of training.

   As an incentive for students, the school would be required to guarantee immediate placement in a transitional preparation program, allow the student to take the General Education Development tests at any time or age, and provide credit for acceptable activities such as independent study or employment.
6. Required multi-year study plans for each high school student — A detailed study plan should be developed

for every high school student, indicating his or her program of study leading to high school completion. The purpose of the plan would be to give students, parents, and teachers a carefully prepared multi-year plan indicating planned courses and a proposed timetable for each student to complete diploma requirements. The plan would be completed before the end of the ninth grade and would become part of a student's permanent record; it would include transitional preparation, summer school, a planned leave of absence, evening school, simultaneous cross-enrollment with a college or alternative school, credit by examination or experience, or other arrangements leading to a diploma. Each student's plan would be reviewed annually and modified where appropriate.

7. Transitional preparation programs — A majority of students who drop out of school feel that it was a mistake when reconsidering that decision a year later, but few school districts have mechanisms to help students return to a regular program.

   Therefore, each school should be required to provide an educational assessment to all returning students and a transitional preparation program. This program would have a maximum of 20 students per class enrolled in immersion programs for 10-15 weeks in reading, writing, mathematics, and counseling. A required post-program assessment would be given and each student placed. Credit would not be provided for transitional programs, but if students were able to pass appropriate exams, credit could be allowed.

8. Required remedial assistance — Under current regulations, students scoring below certain levels on State-mandated competency tests must receive remedial instruction. Once students reach an acceptable level of performance, they no longer receive remedial instruction, and are placed in regular classes without additional support. This frequently places the student in a cycle of failure.

   The new proposal would require schools to continued providing remedial services to these students for one year. The assistance might be in a different form than previously offered.

9. Teacher training concerning students' characteristics — There is a current lack of materials for educating teachers concerning the characteristics of the young people who actually comprise the State's student body and how to apply this information to showing instructional strategies and curriculum development. Teachers need information on the characteristics of all students, but particularly on students with special needs or whose backgrounds differ markedly from their own.

   Therefore, it is necessary to develop materials for teacher training concerning the characteristics of students, with special emphasis on cultural diversity, disabilities, individual economic disadvantage, economically distressed communities, health, and limited English proficiency.

✔ ***Retention Strategies*** — Employment trainers and educators know enough about the dropout problem to help teenagers who leave school early. The question is whether they can "mobilize the nation to use this knowledge" and set up programs with a wide range of services, says a new Institute for Educational Leadership (IEL) report.

To work, any dropout prevention effort should include early intervention, an integrated strategy of remedial education and skills training, and follow-up that tracks students after they finish their education and have found a job, says IEL in "Dropouts In America: Enough Is Known for Action." IEL is a nonprofit organization based in Washington, DC, that promotes collaborative approaches to education problems.

The report recommends using experimental "educational services corporations" that would register all youths at-risk of dropping out and offer them an array of services. Such services could include work and education plans custom-designed for each youth, testing, case management, and follow-up.

Drawing on research and interviews with those who work with dropouts, the report concluded that programs offering work experience alone are not enough to draw dropouts back to school or increase their employability. Instead, programs connecting work experience to classroom learning are more successful.

"Dropouts should work, but the experience from the work sites should be used as a reinforcement in a connected classroom component," just as a curriculum should be linked to functional needs in the marketplace, the report says.

IEL also recommends year-round schools or enriched summer programs for at-risk students, adding that dropout prevention efforts should address family and personal problems of students as well as academic performance.

Copies of "Dropouts in America: Enough Is Known for Action" are available for $7.50 from the Publications Department/Institute for Educational Leadership/1001 Connecticut Avenue NW, Suite 310/Washington, DC 20036/(202) 822-8405.

✔ ***Manual for Success*** — The U.S. Department of Education is working on "What Works: Education of the Disadvantaged," a manual dealing with the dropout problem. The purpose of the book is to replicate schools that have effec-

tively dealt with serious dropout problems. It will give tips on how to solve difficult education problems and will describe model programs. It will show how successful schools enlist quality administrators and teachers and work with parents and communities.

The Department has begun contacting national and state educators for recommendations, and is welcoming suggestions.

Recommendations should be sent to John Walters/ Office of the Secretary/U.S. Department of Education/400 Maryland Avenue SW, Room 4181/Washington, DC 20202.

✔ ***Teacher Opportunity Corps*** — The Board of Regents has acted to increase the number of minority students preparing to become teachers and to enhance the sensitivity of all prospective teachers to the particular problems of at-risk students.

The Regents approved Regulations of the Commissioner of Education which formally put into operation the Teacher Opportunity Corps created by the New York State Legislature earlier this year. The Legislature appropriated $1 million for grants to institutions of higher education which offer approved programs leading to teacher certification, to be used for the operation of Teacher Opportunity Corps programs.

The programs must be designed to: (1) enhance the preparation of prospective teachers in meeting the learning needs of pupils at-risk of truancy, academic failure, or dropping out of school, and (2) increase the number of students from minority groups who are enrolled in teacher preparation programs.

Participating institutions will be required to give priority, in selecting students for the program, to individuals who are economically disadvantaged and to students from minority groups historically underrepresented in teaching, including New York State residents who are Black, Hispanic, Native American Indian, or Alaskan Native.

✔ ***Technology Applications*** — The Center for Learning Technology (CLT) of the State Education Department and the Governor's Advisory Committee for Black Affairs are working together on a project to solicit the support of the nation's leading technology industries on the identification of effective applications of technology to minority and "at-risk" learners.

In the fall of 1986, representatives of the Advisory Committee for Black Affairs requested CLT staff to provide assistance on the development of technology recommendations that were incorporated within the Advisory Committee's 1987 report to Governor Cuomo. The report specifically recommended the adoption of initiatives to foster the application of the learning technologies to enhance the academic achievement of "at-risk" students and to reduce the barriers between school and the community.

In June 1987, representatives for the Governor's Advisory Committee for Black Affairs and CLT staff agreed that they would cooperatively approach private industry and seek assistance in the gathering of research information on technology projects that had been effectively undertaken at the local level for enhancing learning opportunities and increasing the retention and participation of minorities, limited-English proficient learners, and other "at-risk" populations.

Assistance was requested of chief executive officers of the nation's major hardware, software, and telecommunications industries in identifying applications of their products in school-aged and adult basic skills programs for limited-English proficient learners, basic skills instruction, and remediation programs for English and non-English speaking learners, highly motivational early basic skill programs, and dropout prevention and/or recovery programs for learners. Educational technology corporations will send this information to the CLT. This information will be used in the development of a publication which will be developed cooperatively by the CLT and the Governor's Advisory Committee.

✔ ***National Forum*** — On December 10-12, 1987, the Interstate Migrant Education Council and the Education Commission of the States sponsored a National Forum on Youth At-Risk. The conference speakers highlighted the following points:

Demographic and economic trends require that the United States deal effectively with the needs of at-risk youth. There will be a substantial number of new workers, a majority of whom will be women, poor, and members of minority groups. To remain competitive, workers must be better educated.

Students are convinced that the lack of "caring" individuals in schools is a major reason for dropping out.

The needs of at-risk students vary considerably, so that solutions must be comprehensive and flexible.

Schools, governments, and community agencies and organizations must organize themselves to deal with the whole child and family. The Rochester City School District's project, with the Annie W. Casey Foundation grant featuring a case management methodology, was reviewed as a model approach.

Mayors, county officials, and business people must be active partners in dealing with the whole student and family.

The most cost-effective element of a comprehensive

plan for at-risk youth is an increased emphasis on comprehensive services, including education, to meet the needs of at-risk youth from before birth through age four.

Programs such as Parents as Teachers, which actively involve parents in their child's educational process, must be implemented.

"The United States Is Not a Child-Centered Society," was the title and central message of a presentation made by Fred Hechinger.

Student record systems continue to be needed, particularly in areas affected by high population mobility, if the educational and human service systems are going to be more effective and accountable in meeting the needs of at-risk youth. The migrant student record transfer system, with its guidance and mentoring component, was cited as an example.

There is a need for states, and the nation as a whole, to increase public awareness of the importance of comprehensive approaches to meeting the needs of at-risk youth. The film "Children in Need," being produced by the Economic Development Council, was cited as an example which responds to this need.

Members of the New York State team, plus other New York representatives, met before and at the end of the forum to discuss New York's efforts and possible legislative initiatives. Members of the team plan to meet again to increase the effectiveness of current efforts and for continued development of possible legislative items related to meeting the needs of at-risk youth.

✔ ***Questions Raised*** — According to the Education Commission of the States (ECS), many questions remain about the effectiveness and mission of many programs designed to reduce high school dropout rates.

Forty-six states have begun programs to keep students from dropping out. In the "ECS Survey of State Initiatives for Youth At-Risk: Dropout Prevention," ECS says that state officials should look at whether such programs are pushing at-risk students out of school by labeling them or singling them out from their peers. In addition, many schools are unclear about the reasons students leave school. ECS questions what messages are given students who are pulled out of regular programs.

Many programs do not address the problem until students are in high school and already at-risk of dropping out. Others lack the flexibility to serve the needs of disadvantaged children; still others face budget problems or fail to provide adequate training for teachers to help such students. ECS claims that what works is a collaborative, wide-ranging approach that addresses the social and educational problems faced by disadvantaged children.

Copies of "ECS Survey of State Initiatives for Youth At-Risk: Dropout Prevention" may be obtained for $2.00 from the Education Commission of the States/Distribution Center/1860 Lincoln St., Suite 300/Denver, CO 80295/ (303) 830-3692.

✔ ***Research Brief*** — The Office of Educational Assessment of the New York City Board of Education has published a series of research- based bulletins. The first in the series is titled "Relating Schools to the Workplace." The intent of the series is to use some of the tremendous amount of data collected about New York City schools in conjunction with important research findings from across the country, to illuminate issues in public education that merit wider attention.

"Relating Schools to the Workplace" discusses one means of preparing students for work: programs that offer guided work experience to students while they are still in high school. It describes a range of high school programs that provide work experience, presents major issues that face educators as they consider such programs, reviews the work experience programs that function in New York City today, and suggests guidelines for tomorrow.

Free copies of the Research Brief are available, while the supply lasts, from the Office of Educational Assessment/ 110 Livingston Street, Room 507/Brooklyn, NY 11201.

✔ ***Voc Ed Dropouts Low*** — New York City's 19 vocational high schools have a lower pupil dropout rate than its academic high schools, and a higher percentage of their graduates go on to college or other education, according to an audit report issued by the State Controller's office.

The dropout rate for 1983-84 was 4.7% for vocational students and 13.5% for others. The three-year rate is 17.5% for vocational and 44% for other students, said the report.

The study, which covered the school years from September 1984 to June 1987, also found that "students are clamoring to get in (to the vocational schools), four times as many as can be accommodated." In the 1985-86 school year, nearly 35,000 students applied for admission, but only 9,000 were accepted.

About 45% of high school students are enrolled in vocational programs either at the 19 specialty schools, which teach 70 skilled trades, or at the 10 academic schools offering vocational programs, the report said. A Board of Education spokesman said enrollment in 1986-87 was 29,271.

✔ ***Voc Ed Study*** — The Carl D. Perkins Act targets 22 percent of the basic grant for disadvantaged students. The Act calls for greater access by at-risk youth to high quality vocational

programs, but information on their participation is limited.

A study by the Federal Education Department of the National Assessment of Vocational Education (NAVE) shows that the quality of vocational education varies from state to state and community to community. Separate vocational classes have not been established for disadvantaged students, except in specialized institutions or in alternative schools or in special programs for dropouts. Programs tend to be offered to academically, rather than economically, disadvantaged students.

In the reauthorization of vocational education, it was suggested by the American Vocational Association (AVA) that there be no major reform, but some "fine-tuning" in the area of delivery of vocational education to special populations.

✔ ***At-Risk Girls*** — The National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE) recently stated that high schools need to become more flexible in the instruction and programs they offer to ensure that girls at-risk of dropping out receive the attention they need to graduate. School bureaucracies are incapable of recognizing that girls' academic and social needs often differ from those of boys' states the report, "What's Promising: New Approaches to Dropout Prevention for Girls."

NASBE believes schools should promote instructional activities that complement girls' cognitive learning styles, stress a collaborative noncompetitive learning environment, establish mentoring programs to expose girls to women who have succeeded in nontraditional occupations, and to provide girls with extracurricular activities that do not revolve around boys' athletics. In addition, support groups comprised of members of the community, parents, teachers, and outside agencies should be established to reach out and counsel young at-risk women; parents should receive counseling to help their daughters make it through school. Doors should be open after hours to girls who have children.

The report is available for $6 from the National Association of State Boards of Education/701 N. Fairfax Street, Suite 340/Alexandria, VA 22314/(703) 684-4000.

✔ ***Committee Report*** — Members of the American Vocational Association (AVA) Ad-Hoc Committee were called upon to prepare a report and make recommendations regarding the implications of increased secondary education graduation requirements for vocational education. The committee believes that the disadvantaged populations are disproportionately affected by narrowing curriculum offerings, particularly with respect to their ability to meet the increased graduation requirements without institutionalized supports. The committee stated that the literature (McDill et al, 1986) shows that a relationship between higher graduation standards and increased dropouts is likely unless additional help is provided in the schools.

The committee recommended broadening, rather than narrowing, the strategies for achieving the goal of excellence for all students. This, they believe, requires a renewed commitment to secondary vocational programs.

✔ ***Intervention Strategy*** — Officials of the State University of New York at Albany (SUNYA) have announced that they would launch a 10-year study to determine if large-scale intervention programs help improve the academic success of at-risk students. This study of 97 disadvantaged sixth grade students will be coordinated by the School of Education, and is part of a campaign by two wealthy Albany residents, Richard and Janet Yulman, who have agreed to pay the college tuition of the students if they graduate from high school.

The program, named "Albany Dreamers: Dream It, Believe It, Do It," is based on the initiative of millionaire Eugene Lang, who, in 1981, offered to pay the college tuition of 61 New York City students from low-income families. The Yulmans have committed about $500,000 to pay the students' tuition and to provide them with academic tutors and mentors, diagnostic testing, and a chance to attend cultural activities.

The university will study how the students in the program compare academically with those in similar cities not participating. SUNYA will attempt to determine the cost of additional education services and the implications for public policy.

✔ ***Nontraditional Vocations*** — Panelists at a recent conference by the Project on Equal Education Rights stated that educators must lead at-risk girls away from traditional vocations and into the male-dominated fields, where they will have a better chance of succeeding financially. For many at-risk girls, occupational training and education are the keys to economic improvement and self-sufficiency. However, few women choose nontraditional routes, mainly because they tend to choose traditional areas such as home economics and cosmetology.

Mary Ann Millsap, project director of Abt Associates Inc., stated that even if they choose a traditional vocation, vocational education is one of the most viable alternatives for at-risk girls. She said that secondary education is not so much training students for a specific occupation as training them in relevant skills, such as computer, and allowing them to explore career paths. Vocational education's purpose, she said, is to teach and enhance basic skills of at-risk students and to serve as an effective tool to keep at-risk students in school.

✔ ***At-Risk Amendments*** — *The U.S. Department of Labor* recently unveiled its proposal to change the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) by focusing on helping at-risk youths to find jobs and learn basic skills. The At-Risk Youth Employment and Training Amendments of 1988 would target youth who face severe disadvantages in the labor market. The bill has not been introduced yet.

The objective of the proposal is to improve the long-term employability of youth. The program would not require new funds because it would use the $718 million JTPA Title IIB funds for fiscal 1989 but would change the current allocation formula to target funds to economically disadvantaged youth. The old formula would be based on level of total unemployment; the new formula would allocate funds based on the relative number of disadvantaged youth living in each Service Delivery Area (SDA).

The proposal would also allow SDA's to provide year-round programs of basic literacy and skills training for at-risk youth in lieu of, or in combination with, the regular summer jobs program.

Under the proposed program, youths in school would receive basic life skills instruction and work experience during the summer; enriched basic skills and tutoring during the school year; individual and group counseling; and pre-employment and socialization skills training.

For dropouts, the program would offer specialized outreach arrangements; occupational skills training combined with basic skills instruction; work experience; work readiness and like skills training; and post-program followup services. Support services, such as transportation and child care, would also be provided.

In addition, linkages with existing school services, community organizations, business and labor organizations, and other education and training programs would be required.

✔ ***Young Tutors*** — *Youth Service America (YSA)* recently issued a report which states that high school and college students should fight the war against illiteracy by tutoring and counseling younger children. The untapped resource of young people could be mobilized to make a difference.

In Youth Serving the Young, YSA outlines a five-year plan to establish a visible national network of programs involving youth in community services for children. The report recommends that community service become a central value for youth.

Also within five years, YSA plans to establish a national initiative for educationally at-risk children, using representatives of major youth service agencies, political and business leaders, educators, and students. The program will focus on those children who, at ages seven and eight, are already falling behind in school. It will provide information on the best training models and research that can be used to help at-risk children.

More information is available from Youth Service America/1319 F Street NW, Suite 900/Washington, DC 20004/(202) 783-8855.

✔ ***Regents Symposium*** — Youth-At-Risk was the topic of a symposium which opened the Regents November 1988 meeting in Albany.

The "youth-at-risk" symposium, which was open to reporters and the public, addressed long-term strategies for dealing with youth who are at-risk of dropping out or failing in school.

Education Commissioner Sobol appointed a task force in December 1987 to examine the subject of youth-at-risk. That task force, which includes educational and civic leaders from across the State, opened the symposium by making public its recommendations to the Regents and answering questions from individual members of the Board. The Regents then heard reactions to the task force report, first from Commissioner Sobol, then from State Senate Education Committee Chair James Donovan and Deputy Secretary to the Governor for Human Services Michael Dowling.

In its report, the task force says, "Every day the gap is widening between the life options for children who attend schools in affluent or stable communities and children who attend schools in poor communities."

"Too often," the report continues, "at-risk children are concentrated in failing schools which have the most inadequate resources, the most dilapidated plants, and the most dispirited teachers."

Recommendations in the report include:

- Expanding developmentally appropriate early childhood education programs for youth-at-risk.
- Providing teachers and administrators with greater autonomy in decision making.
- Increasing accountability for educational performance.
- Revising teacher recruitment, training, and in-service practices to enhance services for youth-at-risk.
- Mandating instructional support services for "language minority" students.
- Revising practices which result in disproportional representation of minorities in special education classes.
- Increasing opportunities for parents to participate in the education of their children.

- Developing comprehensive data systems for student attendance, achievement, and retention.

✔ ***Disadvantaged Children*** — Education advocates are pointing to a new United States Census Bureau report as further proof that the nation's schools must do more for disadvantaged children.

The report shows that one in five American children now lives in poverty and that more minority children are living in poor families than ever before.

Because poor children are at risk of failing academically, schools should improve their programs for the disadvantaged, putting in place comprehensive plans heavy on early intervention and family involvement, advocate groups are saying. Despite a continuing modest economic recovery over the past five years, the child poverty rate did not improve from 1986 to 1987, the Census Bureau stated.

To be noted particularly is the rise in the rate of poverty for minority children. Compared to the national average of all people, the poverty rate for black children increased to 45.1 percent in 1987 from 42.7 percent in 1986; for Hispanic children the rate increased to 39.3 percent in 1987 from 37.1 percent the previous year, the Census Bureau reported. Inner-city schools usually lag further behind in serving poor children because they do not implement the proven programs that encourage children to learn their way out of poverty. *Money Income and Poverty State Report on Consumer Income* is free from the Superintendent of Documents/U.S. Government Printing Office/ Washington, DC 20402/(202) 763-8574.

✔ ***New Depression*** — Harold Howe, former U.S. education commissioner, recently spoke about a report that describes the squeeze young workers have felt due to job market changes. Nearly 33 of every 100 families headed by a person under 25 lived below the poverty level in 1986, more than double the level in 1967 and triple the rate for all American families in 1986. Most noncollege youth and young families are earning less than their predecessors 15 years ago.

To give noncollege youth the same kind of guidance given to those who pursue higher education, the report advocates improving the quality and funding of current Federal programs such as the Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act and the Job Training Partnership Act. It also suggests a state-administered, federally funded national demonstration program to provide grants that will allow nonprofit organizations to give noncollege youth the information they need to plan further education or job training.

The study, The Forgotten Half: Pathways to Success for America's Youth and Young Families, was conducted by the William T. Grant Foundation, and concludes that we should consider the needs of all our young people for education and training, particularly those who need education and training to succeed in the world of work.

Single copies of the report are free from Youth and America's Future/William T. Grant Foundation/1001 Connecticut Avenue NW, Suite 301/Washington, DC 20036-5541/(202) 775-9731.

✔ ***Early Help*** — In accepting the statement at its annual conference in Indianapolis, the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) emphasized an organizational as well as state commitment to helping at-risk students. The chiefs have adopted a statement urging states to provide preschool and child care programs to all children. In the one-page statement, the chiefs agree to help states better understand the importance of early childhood education and work with them to set up efficient, quality programs. By joining together, the partnership of family health and education could help children triumph over the various external forces that threaten their potential, the statement says, noting that poverty and other social constraints place 25 percent of the nation's children at risk of personal or educational failure.

CCSSO recommends:

- that each state set up a council to plan for the delivery of early education programs for infants through eight-year-olds;
- that states distribute money to local councils contingent upon the establishment of preschool programs;
- that states oversee new programs to ensure they are developmentally appropriate and adequately staffed;
- that states ensure that programs encourage family involvement and follow acceptable adult-child ratios;
- that states establish coalitions of educators, human service providers, business leaders, and concerned citizens to help acquire funds, ensure access, and train their personnel;
- that states establish a system for collecting and monitoring data that identify the needs of young children; and
- that states help develop a national clearinghouse on model programs, practices, and research. The national agenda also should include resources for the continuation of research on early childhood services.

For more information, contact Jay Goldman/Council of Chief State School Officers/379 Hall of States/400 N. Capitol Street NW/Washington, DC 20001/(202) 393-8161.

✔ ***Policy Study*** — States must create more uniformity and coordination within the service system for at-risk youth,

according to a policy study released by the New York State Job Training Partnership Council.

Every Child Can Learn, Every New Yorker Can Work: A Statement of Policy on Youth Employment Investments was developed by the New York State Job Training Partnership Council and endorsed by Governor Mario M. Cuomo.

The motivating force behind this study is the large number of young New Yorkers "at-risk" in school and the workplace, combined with the demand for increasingly skilled workers. Market forces alone will not solve these problems. It will take sophisticated, integrated intervention of the private sector and government to prepare our State's young people for success in the labor market.

The policy statement presents recommendations to guide the design and operation of youth programs: early intervention to promote achievement, motivators to increase school performance and retention, preparation for work through vocational and career guidance, and services for out-of-school youth. These recommendations do not call for creation of new programs. The intent is to emphasize the need to define and focus current program efforts.

The next step will be to conduct a study to determine the extent to which the State's education and job training programs for youth incorporate these guidelines. Necessary changes in legislation, regulations, and funding needed to implement the statewide youth employment policy will be recommended to the Governor and the State Legislature by the Council.

✔ ***Special Ed Dropouts*** — Special education students are disproportionately represented among dropouts, but educators and policymakers have largely overlooked them, according to a study conducted by *SRI International* for the Federal Education Department. This five-year longitudinal study is based on interviews and data on 8,000 youths who were 13 to 23 years old in the 1985-86 school year.

While people may assume special education students receive plenty of individualized attention, that often is not the case. Many receive minimal services if any at all.

Common predictors of whether a student would drop out are the student's age, academic performance, and attendance record. Poor performance and attendance and misbehavior are warning signals. Youth exhibiting negative social behavior are more likely to drop out than those who don't. Belonging to a social group significantly reduces the likelihood of dropping out.

Less severely impaired youth were more likely to receive failing grades. More severely disabled students do not necessarily drop out at a higher rate, and were likely to receive better grades. The reason given was that less severely impaired students were more likely to be mainstreamed, where standards are often stiffer than in special education placements.

Dropouts: The Relationship of Student Characteristics, Behaviors and Performance for Special Education Students may be obtained from the Council for Exceptional Children/ 1920 Association Drive/Reston, VA 22091/(703) 620-3660.

Programs and Projects

✔ ***"Zero-Based" Dropouts*** — A unique city-wide public/private partnership has been formed in Richmond, Indiana. This partnership seeks to ensure that every young person in the city graduates from high school. The project is run by the Townsend Community Center, which administers and operates a "70001" program site. To achieve this goal, several agencies have formed a partnership to coordinate and monitor the progress of youth identified as at-risk. Richmond Community Schools, Townsend Community Center, Wayne County Opportunities Industrialization Center (WCOIC), and 70001 Training and Employment Institute from this partnership. These partners will anchor what will become a communitywide support network for youth that links existing youth-serving organizations with the schools, parents, and the business community.

The need for this kind of project is based on several assumptions: at-risk youth, whether they are in school or out, lack training and exposure to expectations about the world of work; have very low academic skills, especially in the areas of reading and mathematics; possess low self-esteem and confidence; and require individualized instruction, not always available in the traditional classroom setting. Traditional programming has had a tendency to address each of these issues separately, thereby fragmenting the service delivery system to at-risk youth.

The Townsend Community Center will serve as the primary service provider to deliver education and training services. In cooperation with the Richmond Community Schools, the Center will develop Education Support Centers to provide academic instruction, counseling, personal skill development, job-readiness training, motivational activities, and job-placement services. In cooperation with the schools, classes for credit toward high school graduation will be offered to qualified students. Furthermore, coordinated efforts to address family life issues and illiteracy among Richmond's troubled youth will be an integral part of programming.

✔ ***Task Force*** — Commissioner Sobol recently announced the establishment of the Task Force on Children and Youth At-Risk. The charge to the task force is "to develop a comprehensive, long-term strategy for improving the education of children and youth at-risk and for accomplishing significant reduction in the dropout rate."

In conducting its review, the task force was instructed by Sobol to:

- consider the needs of children and youth from birth to young adulthood;
- identify promising practices at the State and local levels;
- determine what additional efforts may be needed; and
- identify needs for new legislation, additional funding, and other logistical support.

This task force was committed to make its recommendations to the Regents and the Commissioner by February 1988.

✔ ***Summer Training Program*** — Public/Private Ventures (PPV), which is based in Philadelphia, has offered a Summer Training and Education Program (STEP) for at-risk youth since the summer of 1985. This program, which expects ultimately to have 4,500 participants, is run at five sites: Boston, Seattle, Portland, Fresno, and San Diego. Participants selected are primarily minority persons from poor families headed by females.

STEP offers youths six to eight weeks of a combination of paid academic and work experience, plus two days a week of life skills training. Participants combined a part-time job with 90 hours of group and individual instruction in math and reading, plus 18 hours of "life skills" instruction that focused on social and sexual responsibility to teen pregnancy. Students not in STEP, but in a work experience, lost remedial skills at an alarming rate. STEP students in their second year were more than a half grade better at reading and math by the end of the summer.

Public/Private Ventures has concluded that summer job-training systems should go farther, perhaps combining resources with local school districts, to develop programs incorporating study with work. For disadvantaged youths, the loss in the summer of academic progress gained during the school year is greater than that of most students, and the time needed to make it up is longer. For this reason, it is concluded, money spent on summer youth job programs, such as Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA), may be misdirected or even wasted in terms of keeping disadvantaged students in school.

New requirements for Title IIA operators include assessment of remedial skills, increased remedial skills training, and provision of academic training.

For more information, contact Public/Private Ventures/399 Market Street/Philadelphia, PA 19106.

✔ ***Stay in School Grants*** — Awards totaling $1.5 million in "Stay in School Partnership" (SSPP) grants have been made to 10 colleges or universities for joint projects with local school districts in 1987-88. This is the second year SSPP monies have been available.

In announcing the awards, then Commissioner of Education Gordon Ambach said, "A school's connection with a college can have a powerful effect on motivating students to complete high school. To increase graduation rates, we must use the resources of our colleges to help the schools directly. These awards enable the connection."

The grants enable colleges to provide support services and compensatory activities for public school pupils identified as having a high risk of truancy and academic failure. Preference was given to projects serving school buildings eligible for Attendance Improvement and Dropout Prevention support and identified by the Education Department's Comprehensive Assessment Report (CAR) as being in need of improvement.

Of the ten colleges or universities receiving grants, five are in New York City. The others are located in Buffalo, Rochester, Yonkers, Binghamton, and Suffolk County.

Under the program, 38 elementary and secondary schools benefit from the college service. Fourteen of these are required to submit Comprehensive School Improvement Plans to the State Education Department. The ten projects will serve 2,755 at-risk students.

✔ ***Dropout Prevention Grant*** — The Bolivar Central School (Allegheny County) has received a $25,000 grant from the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) for a school dropout prevention effort.

The grant will help cover expenses of an innovative alternative education program at Bolivar Central School. Students at-risk of dropping out of the education program at Bolivar Central School will work with senior citizens on the remodeling and preparation for resale of a vacant home. Proceeds of the home sale will be used to purchase additional homes for remodeling.

The grant is part of the Appalachian Regional Commission's school dropout reduction initiative which funds dropout prevention projects throughout the thirteen states in the Appalachian region.

✔ ***Adolescent Vocational Exploration Program Training*** — The Bureau of Occupational and Continuing Education Program Support (BOCEPS) has begun training staff members of community-based organizations (CBOs) to implement the Adolescent Vocational Exploration (AVE) Program.

AVE is an experiential-based career education (EBCE) program operated by CBOs for 14 to 16 year-old youths who are at-risk of becoming school dropouts, unemployed

young adults, or youthful offenders. The program focuses on early intervention, emphasizes basic skills, and actively involves business and industry.

The New York State Department of Labor (NYSDOL) is responsible for overall program administration and selects program operators through a competitive request-for-proposals process. The State Education Department is responsible for adapting and refining EBCE models for program implementation providing in-depth training of all CBO staff and reviewing AVE programs for the purpose of recommending academic credit.

This program year, NYSDOL selected 25 CBO's to operate AVE programs throughout the State. BOCEPS is providing training for AVE program implementation to over 100 staff members of CBO's operating AVE programs with the assistance of MAGI Educational Services, a private consulting group. Intensive training is conducted over a three-week period prior to the start of program operations.

✔ ***Work Experience and Training*** — In New York City, personnel directors are learning to depend on the Board of Education's Work Experience and Training Unit to fill a broad spectrum of their entry-level job openings. These may range from simple, unskilled jobs to sophisticated positions in clerical, trade, industrial, and computer technology areas. As a means of reaching out to students not enrolled in traditional high schools, the unit is working with outreach centers, Attendance Improvement Dropout Prevention (AIDP) schools, and the single parent and special education populations. A pilot program, which started in February, extends alternate week cooperative education to 120 special education students in 10 targeted high schools. Ninety-five percent of the youngsters were successfully placed during the spring semester. Placement was accomplished without identifying the students as "Special Education" to the employer. Feedback has been very positive. As with all co-op students, this group demonstrated improvement in self-esteem, personal appearance, daily attendance, and punctuality as a result of early work experience. In September, the program will be increased to include another 60 students in five additional schools.

At Automotive High School, 22 students who are learning disabled are enrolled in the Training Opportunities Program. The physical handicaps of the students in no way prevent them from working in their chosen field of automotive mechanics. Students are placed on an alternate week schedule in automobile shops, assisting the master mechanics in overhauling engines, preventive maintenance, and more. After completing the training, nine 1986 co-op graduates were hired for full-time positions as Auto Service Workers. The School to Employment Program addresses the needs of youth at-risk of dropping out of high school. In collaboration with the Department of Employment of the Human Resources Administration, youngsters 16-18 years of age, from 14 targeted inner-city schools, are offered supportive services and financial incentives to remain in high school and earn their diplomas. The program provides part-time jobs in the afternoon, with the provision that students attend classes in the morning. This year approximately 250 students are succeeding both in school and on the job, and many are finding career paths for full-time work after graduation. The economic forecast indicates that, in the foreseeable future, the number of job openings for skilled workers will continue to exceed the available labor force in New York City. The Work Experience and Training Unit will continue its search for new linkages and additional initiatives to fulfill the mission of collaborating with business and industry to match the right student to the right job.

✔ ***CAMP STAR*** — One hundred minority high school students in New York City, both at-risk and academically gifted, recently attended an innovative residential program, called CAMP STAR. The project's goal is to strengthen students' academic skills and motivation for continuing in school, going on to postsecondary education, and pursuing professional careers, especially in math, science, and the professions, through teaching basic analytical reasoning and problem-solving skills which can be applied to many situations.

CAMP STAR is unique because of the cooperative arrangement which supports it. Lehman College of The City University of New York, with support from the Josiah Macy, Jr. Medical Foundation, is the fiscal agent responsible for the overall planning and implementation of the program. Marymount College (Tarrytown) hosted the four-week residential program. Students were drawn from the A. Phillip Randolph, Clara Barton, DeWitt Clinton, Morris, and Walton High Schools.

Lottie Taylor, principal of A. Phillip Randolph Campus High School, who originated the program, served as the on-site campus and curriculum director. Thomas K. Minter, dean of professional studies at Lehman College, served as principal investigator for the project.

The New York State Education Department supported the project through grants to the participating colleges under three programs: STEP (Science and Technology Entry Program), HEOP (Higher Education Opportunity Program), and Title II of Federal EESA (Education for Economic Security Act).

During the four residential weeks in July, students worked in groups of ten in classrooms and laboratories,

led by teacher consultants, with an emphasis on hands-on problem solving and group reinforcement of learning for all. While instruction was geared to the academically gifted, each group was heterogeneous in terms of student abilities.

According to Mike Van Ryn, Assistant Commissioner for Higher Education Services, "We have not often been able to achieve the synergistic effect from combining several grant programs which will happen with CAMP STAR. This gives us an opportunity to promote two major Regents priorities — improving retention of at-risk students and increasing the numbers of minorities pursuing careers in math, science, and the professions — through a very promising program. I am especially excited about the concept of blending at-risk and gifted young people in learning teams."

All three of the State grants are administered by the Department's Division of Postsecondary Access and Equity. This newly created Division has primary responsibility for college programs targeted to improving educational opportunities for minority and disadvantaged students and improving the skills of those who will teach them.

Footnote: CAMP STAR stands for Commitment, Achievement, Motivation, Progress through Stress on Thinking, Analyzing, and Reasoning Skills.

✔ ***Community Partnership Funds*** — The Board of Regents recently approved guidelines for the distribution of $7 million in special funds appropriated by the Legislature to establish community partnership demonstration programs designed to serve at-risk students. The programs are intended to promote coordination of education and social services to students who are at-risk of not completing high school because of drug or alcohol abuse, pregnancy, parenthood, academic failure, or family problems.

Funds will be awarded on a competitive basis to school districts and boards of cooperative educational services for plans, designed in cooperation with community service agencies, to provide comprehensive services over a three-year period. Funds, which will be available for the 1987-88 school year, can be used to support up to 90 percent of the total cost of the program for the first year, 60 percent for the second year, and 30 percent the third year.

Grants to schools and BOCES will be limited to $200,000 and priority will be given to applicants which are able to secure additional financial support from other sources. Schools applying for funds must fully describe how they will cooperate with other government agencies, community support services, and business and industry to develop a comprehensive service plan. The plan must include procedures for establishing a local coordinating council and identifying at-risk youth; it must also enumerate available community resources and how they will be used.

In addition, the State Education Department is authorized to create an interagency clearinghouse to collect and disseminate information on model programs, curricula, and publications to serve at-risk youth. The clearinghouse will provide data to schools, health and social service agencies, professional societies, and other interested parties.

✔ ***Attendance Improvement*** — In a related move to curtail the high school dropout rate, the Regents approved regulations implementing legislation adopted this year to extend the attendance improvement and dropout prevention program to rural school districts, small city school districts, and boards of cooperative educational services.

The Legislature appropriated $1 million for the program, with special emphasis on rural school districts with total enrollments of less than 3,000 and districts with a high dropout rate. This is in addition to funds already targeted to 70 larger school districts, since 1984-85, to be used for attendance improvement and dropout prevention.

Grants, not to exceed $50,000 per school or $10,000 for a consortium, will be awarded on a competitive basis to schools to motivate students with a high risk of truancy or academic failure to remain in school. Priority will be given to programs which target services to pregnant or parenting teenagers, which contain activities to promote parental involvement and skill development, and which show a high degree of coordination with other State, local, or federally funded programs. Plans must also include descriptions of procedures to identify high-risk students and services to be provided.

✔ ***Innovative Funding*** — The New York State Board of Regents recently proposed a 9.4 percent increase in State aid to local school districts and additional funds to programs for at-risk students. A new aid program titled Public Accountability for Comprehensive Education (PACE) recommends that 38 percent of the proposed increase be directed to districts based on the concentration of school-aged children living in poverty.

Chairperson of the Regents task force on State Aid to Schools, Mimi Lieber, stated that "the Task Force has sought to direct State funds more heavily to those school districts serving economically disadvantaged children who share a disproportionate risk of academic failure." Nearly $130 million in new initiatives was recommended which stress both early intervention and the support of high-risk

students. In addition, there will be greater emphasis on accountability for those districts which have substantial identifiable needs.

✔ ***Network Formed*** — The National Dropout Prevention Network (NDPN) was formed in May, 1987 at an invitational conference hosted by Clemson University. The National Center for Research in Vocational Education was elected to the NDPN executive committee.

NDPN was formed to link educators, researchers, parents, communities, and business leaders in a network aimed at developing solutions to the problem of students leaving school. The major objectives of the network are:

to stimulate awareness, among educators and the public, of dropout prevention;

to encourage additional support for drop-out prevention research, analysis, and programmatic activity;

to increase dissemination of information about national, regional, and local dropout prevention strategies and activities; and

to facilitate the development of a support network that will encourage collaboration, cooperation, and sharing among everyone working on dropout prevention.

NDPN is affiliated with Aspen Institute for Humanistic Studies.

For information about the NDPN and the National Center's role in its operation, contact Jay Smink at (800) 848-4815.

✔ ***Business/Education Partnership*** — Patterned after the Boston Compact, the Florida Compact pilot program was set up initially in four counties, and then expanded to others. The program is a partnership between business and education to keep teenagers from dropping out of school. The goal is to bring school districts into agreements with businesses, vocational programs, higher education institutions, government agencies, and community groups to provide jobs for high school graduates and to increase opportunities for them to continue their education in vocational schools or other postsecondary institutions. Under the compact, businesses can help motivate at-risk students to stay in school by guaranteeing jobs after school, during the summer, and after graduation for those who meet certain grade and attendance requirements.

Florida hopes to help more than 5,000 students through the Compact by 1990. In the 1985-86 school year, 40,000 students dropped out of school in Florida.

The Boston Compact model is credited with increasing school attendance by 12 percent, test scores by 6 percent, and college placements by 15 percent since its inception in 1982.

✔ ***Pregnant Teens*** — A three-year program in Prince George's County, Maryland, and Milwaukee has been sponsored by the National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE). The purpose of the program is to keep pregnant and parenting teens in school.

Following the first year of the project, both schools reported that retention rates exceeded expectations considerably. At Bladensburg High School (Prince George's County), the retention rate was 93 percent.

Important to the success of the program is the one-on-one contact the counselor is able to maintain with students. The Bladensburg counselor helped students find child care and transportation to local social services agencies. In addition, the counselor worked with the school system's youth employment office to help students in the program gain employment skills. Although the NASBE model program requires hiring an extra counselor for each school, it is still considered to be a more cost-effective solution than to staff an alternative school or the real social and economic costs of a high school dropout.

✔ ***Outreach Program*** — The Bronx Outreach Center servicing high school dropouts ages 16-1/2 to 21 is piloting a new program which will retain outreach students through master teaching, block programming, and strong teacher pupil bonding. Goals of the pilot are improved attendance and retention, academic achievement, and personal growth.

Student characteristics include: a reading grade of 6.0 to 7.5; highly verbal students; students who expect immediate results; and students who are impatient with school and who are likely to see employment as a realistic alternative to continuing school.

Two teachers, selected for their professional skills and humane qualities, are responsible for interviewing and writing the educational prescription for each student, which includes block programming of all students for English and history with one teacher, and math and science with another, assisting students in choosing their electives, utilizing the support of computer-assisted instruction, and group counseling. Teachers meet regularly to review the progress of individual students. Cultural and educational activities and trips have been planned to supplement the academic program.

✔ ***Solutions to Dropouts*** — Schools, businesses, and community organizations are searching for new ways to keep

at-risk students in school. In some cities, alternative schools for dropout-prone students are a solution. Others call on business volunteers to serve as mentors to low-achieving teenagers. Others are using free health clinics and related services to draw young mothers into education programs.

Fourteen successful dropout prevention programs are outlined in a new report, "What to Do About Youth Dropouts — A Summary of Solutions," by Margaret Terry Orr. These models create a framework for successful dropout prevention efforts. Orr claims that the dropout problem is complex and requires not one solution, but many.

Programs described by the report include peer counseling and volunteer adult advisors to motivate ninth graders; Adopt a Student, in Atlanta, which pairs volunteer mentors with low-achieving high school juniors and seniors and holds monthly job preparation workshops to encourage students to stay in school; Summer Youth Employment Program in New Bedford, Massachusetts, which mixes summer jobs for disadvantaged youth with remedial education programs.

This report may be obtained at a cost of $5.00 from the Hispanic Policy Development Project/1001 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Suite 310/Washington, DC 20036/(202) 822-8414.

✔ ***Evening Outreach*** — Andrew Jackson High School (Queens) has offered a new kind of evening learning program, unique in that it offers not only General Education Diploma (GED) preparation, but also help for students who are still in high school, or who wish to return to daytime classes. The program, called Evening Outreach, is a joint effort of Jackson and the citywide High School Outreach Program. Students currently enrolled in day high school are invited to join Evening Outreach especially if they are truant from classes or are having trouble passing their courses.

High school equivalency subjects are taught in individualized learning labs. This allows students to move ahead at their own pace to keep up with essential learning if they are absent. To keep the students from dropping out, the program provides tutoring, homework help, private counseling, and advocacy help in dealing with school officials and other authorities.

Day students are able to use this program to earn extra credits toward graduation. Young people who have already left school, but are thinking of going back for a regular diploma, will also be able to earn high school credits. This will be done by a combination of classroom instruction, independent guided study, and evaluation of their experiences outside school, such as work or parenthood.

✔ ***Dropout Reduction*** — An effective school dropout prevention program has contributed to High School (Queens). The program, called Outreach, includes counseling, preparation for the General Education Diploma (GED), tests for students who have already dropped out, a caring, committed staff, and a flexible program that meets the individual needs of each student.

The school has initiated a program to help at-risk students, who are most likely to come from families with low incomes or limited education. The school attempts to identify and work with at-risk students as they enter school. Students absent 15 days or more go to a guidance counselor. At-risk students are placed in a special program to prepare to prepare them for the GED test or to take the test rather than drop out.

✔ ***Grants Approved*** — Commissioner of Education Thomas Sobol recently announced the approval of 58 Youth-At-Risk and Community Partnership Program grants totalling $3.3 million. The purpose of the program is to promote the coordination of school and community resources to provide a full range of services for youth-at-risk.

In announcing the awards, the Commissioner said: "The Youth-At-Risk and Community Partnership Program is an excellent example of the deep commitment the State Education Department has toward all the students we serve. We need to provide comprehensive educational and social services which will help students deal constructively with life stress and crisis. The Youth-At-Risk and Community Partnership Projects recognize the collaborative efforts needed in bolstering the strengths of those youth-at-risk."

The funds were awarded as a result of legislation enacted in 1987 which provides $7 million for youth-at-risk. School districts and BOCES received funding ranging from $5,519 to $66,667 for the period March 1 to June 30, 1988. Funds received through this grant program can be used to support up to 90 percent of the total program costs for that four-month period. The Legislature will be asked to continue the grants through 1989.

Programs which received grant awards emphasized prevention services for youth.

Schools will serve as the pivotal medium for providing these activities, but the school districts and BOCES must use 60 percent of grant funds to purchase services from community agencies or groups which have expertise related to factors associated with youth-at-risk. Providers chose to focus on one or more of the following ten eligible

activities:

- parenting education
- drug and alcohol abuse prevention and early intervention education
- suicide prevention education
- child abuse prevention education
- nutrition education programs
- preventive health services
- activities to coordinate education and prevention programs with related community efforts
- activities to involve local law enforcement agencies in school-based alcohol and drug use prevention and intervention activities

-appropriate intervention, case management, and referral services for children requiring such services.

In addition to prevention services, programs are needed to provide for the identification of youth-at-risk and the coordination of intervention services using a case management approach. Services are intended for students who exhibit behaviors or problems associated with being at-risk of not completing school.

✔ ***Prevention Grants*** — The United States Office of Elementary and Secondary Education hopes to award dropout prevention grants early this summer so that school districts will have programs ready this fall. Of the $24 million available, the appropriations bill allocates 25 percent to districts with enrollment of 100,000 or more; 40 percent to districts with fewer than 100,000 but at least 20,000 students; and 30 percent to smaller districts. The remaining 5 percent is for community organizations.

Grants will go to demonstration projects in four categories: programs to identify potential dropouts and to prevent them from quitting school; early intervention programs for students in elementary and early high schools who are at-risk of dropping out; programs to encourage dropouts to return to school; and model systems for collecting and reporting information to school officials on their local dropout problems.

✔ ***Vocational Foundation*** — Open to all New York City residents, the Auxiliary Services for High Schools at Vocational Foundation, Inc. (ASHS-VFI) is a special cooperative project between the Board of Education and the Foundation, which is a not-for-profit agency. This joint venture with the private sector incorporates preparation for the High School Equivalency Examination with job readiness skills and job placement in the executive offices of the foundation. Employment opportunities are developed around education priorities — students are eligible for on-site training and off-site programs at the Fashion Institute of Technology.

Students who attend ASHS-VFI have been "pushed out" or have dropped out of school.

While the majority of the students come from traditional schools, some of the students come from the Division for Youth, Rikers Island After Care Program, and some are victims of racially motivated crimes. A deemphasis on the past and a concentrated effort on improving the quality of life for all people are the keys creating a learning environment which is pro-educational and free of disturbances.

Academically, a record number of students have completed their high school experience and have gone on to improve the transition from zero percent attendance to 80 percent plus attendance.

✔ ***Youth Literacy*** — Project Literacy U.S. (PLUS) is now taking the initiative with young illiterates. A new phase of the PLUS campaign, successfully fighting illiteracy in adults, will establish youth literacy programs in the 366 PLUS task force agencies throughout the country and will offer television and radio programming and outreach programs. This move was based on research that shows that weak basic skills is a key variable in all major problems that hamper the development of young people. PLUS programming will examine the interconnected problems of school dropouts, substance abuse, teenage pregnancy, delinquency, and unemployment.

PLUS will promote increased monitoring of young people, increased community and parental involvement in schools, and increased reading and writing among youth.

✔ ***Brainpower PR*** — Brainpower, Inc. was formed in 1985 when area leaders got together to try to improve Rochester's school system. The group took on a number of tasks: finding part-time jobs for high school students and full-time employment for graduates, developing partnerships between businesses and schools advancing teacher and counselor training, availing schools of business community resources, and marketing education. In 1986, Brainpower leaders asked the Rochester Ad Council to create advertising to convince poor inner-city students to stay in school, regardless of economic or social circumstances. Thirty percent of Rochester's 33,000 inner-city students drop out. Two 30-second TV spots were developed, encouraging young people to stay in school. Funding for the stay-in-school ad campaign is a joint effort of the Rochester Chamber of Commerce and the city's Industrial Management Council, whose members include Kodak and Xerox. The Rochester Ad Council is donating services.

Among the companies supporting the $31 million, two-year improvement program are *Bausch & Lomb, E.I. duPont de Nemours & Co., Eastman Kodak Co., General Motors Corp., IBM Corp., Marine Midland Bank, Rochester Area McDonald's Operators Association, Rochester Electric & Gas, and Xerox Corp.*

Brainpower estimates marketing expenditures at $1.1 million, with $700,000 of that in donated services.

✔ ***Summer Program*** — Eleven more communities in 4 states will run the Summer Training and Education Programs (STEP), pilot-tested in five cities across the country during the summer of 1988. The program combines summer work experience and specially designed classes in academic and decisionmaking skills to help keep students in school. The program, operated by *Public/Private Ventures (P/PV)*, links its own resources with the federally funded Summer Youth Employment and Training Program. P/PV is a national program development and research organization with major funding from the *Ford Foundation, the U.S. Department of Labor*, and other foundations and agencies.

Those eighth and ninth graders eligible for the Federal summer youth program enroll in STEP for two summers of half-time work and half-time study. During the year, they meet regularly with counselors who guide them through school. STEP youths earn minimum wage in the summer program.

The 2,250 youths enrolled in P/PV's three-year pilot test of STEP had higher reading and math scores at the end of the summer than did a similar group that had only summer jobs.

✔ ***Liberty Programs*** — The idea behind a new $10 million program — a companion to Governor Cuomo's Liberty Scholarship Program — called *Liberty Partnerships* is for colleges across New York State to work with schools and business, industry, and community organizations to help at-risk students increase school performance.

Both these "Liberty" programs were the subject of a State Education Department teleconference, telecast over the State's public television stations on Tuesday, December 6, 1988.

During the teleconference, viewers received information not only on Liberty Scholarships, but also on Liberty Partnership grants to be awarded for the 1989 school year. These grants will go to college or universities, and will support many school services such as skills assessment, counseling, home visits, tutoring, and career awareness activities.

Education Commissioner Thomas Sobol began the conference with brief taped remarks.

Following their introductions, the *Sarah Garnett School of District 16* (JHS 324), Brooklyn, *Greenwich Junior/Senior High School*, and *The New York Alliance for Public Schools* were subjects of three separate video features.

Ed Dague, managing editor and anchor of *WNYT-TV News* (Albany), moderated the teleconference.

Teachers, administrators, students, and the general public had an opportunity to participate in a question-and-answer period during the telecast. Answering their questions were Cornelius J. Foley, President of the *Higher Education Services Corporation*, and Jeanine L. Grinage, Director of the State Education Department's *Division of Postsecondary Equity and Access Programs*.

Liberty Scholarships, which will be available during the 1991-92 academic year, will provide low-income students who live in New York State with an opportunity to pursue a college education at public and private institutions located in New York State upon high school graduation.

Liberty Partnerships, developed by colleges and universities in cooperation with public and nonpublic schools, community-based organizations, business, and private industry will help keep "at-risk" students in school and help them successfully complete their education.

✔ ***Peer Tutors*** — Tennessee is working on changing its 25 percent dropout rate through a program that enlists student volunteers as tutors for at-risk students. Student volunteers help their peers improve reading skills and study habits.

Funding sources are the State of Tennessee and South Central Bell in Tennessee. The president of South Central Bell stated that he would like to see those young people stay in school.

With dropout rates of more than 40 percent in some counties, the *Governor's Study Partner Program* is one part of a multipronged strategy for boosting literacy and student retention. More than half the dropouts have less than an eighth grade education. About 250,000 Tennessee children are at-risk of dropping out.

In addition, $1 million this year was earmarked by the governor to expand the Jobs for Tennessee Graduates Program which provides at-risk students with school-to-work transition assistance during their junior and senior years. The State Education Department of Tennessee is also developing curriculum for middle schools to boost at-risk students' awareness of career opportunities afforded by a high school diploma and the consequences of dropping out. In addition, $36,000 was allocated to fund a first-of-its-kind pilot learning center with a one-room, drop-in service for homework and counseling assistance to students and parent training and literacy classes for adults.

For more information, contact Emory Register/ Governor's Study Partner Program/Office of the Commissioner of Education/Cordell Hull Building, Suite 100/Nashville, TN 37219/(615) 741-1878.

✔ ***College Tutors*** — Graduate students at a major university are helping inner-city youths stay in school in a program that has assisted one high school in cutting in half its dropout rate. Twenty-four *New York University* (NYU) graduate students conduct one-on-one and small-group tutoring sessions with more than 400 of New York City's high school students most at-risk of dropping out. The dropout rate at *Bushwick High School* (Brooklyn) has fallen from 16 percent in the 1983-84 school year to 8.6 percent in 1987-88. The success of the Bushwick program, which started as a pilot project that has expanded to three other New York City high schools, prompted the *New York State Legislature* to create the Stay in School Partnership Program a $3.5 million effort based on the Bushwick model.

The graduate students focus on English-as-a-second-language training, literacy, and mathematics in their tutoring sessions, held three days a week. The graduate students also help students with their homework and with keeping up with their studies. This personalized attention increases the students' motivation to learn and to stay in school.

For more information on the program, contact Wayne Karmosky, New York University/25 West Fourth Street/New York, NY 10012/(212) 998-6848.

✔ ***National Center*** — Concerned by the growing numbers of students dropping out of school, a group of private individuals and business people moved to action.

In 1986, they established the *National Dropout Prevention Center* which is now located on the campus of *Clemson University* (Clemson, South Carolina).

The Center's mission is to encourage collaborative efforts by the public and private sectors to combat the negative social and economic effects of school dropouts. The Center serves as a repository and clearinghouse of information for groups and individuals concerned about the dropout prevention problem.

To date, the National Dropout Prevention Center has been active on both the national and local levels by:

- development and publication of a national directory of sources of information on dropout prevention;
- cosponsorship of several national and regional conferences on the dropout problem;
- development of a statewide network of educators, business leaders, and community groups concerned with dropout issues;
- sponsorship of workshops and forums aimed at coordinating research and development efforts in dropout prevention; and
- publication of a quarterly newsletter featuring model programs, current research, and organizations actively involved in dropout prevention activities.

Efforts are continuing toward establishment of a national database of strategies, model programs, research reports, and statistics to be available through on-line access. Completion of the database is projected for mid-summer.

Future activities include the development of a public/private partnership model dropout prevention program which can be adapted and implemented at the local level.

Work is also proceeding on other publications, including an analytical paper addressing efforts to establish an accurate national dropout rate, as well as a primer on mentorship outlining practical suggestions for the development of a mentoring program.

For more information, contact Lib Crockett, Information Specialist/ National Dropout Prevention Center/Clemson University/Clemson, SC 29634-5111/(800) 443-6392 toll-free.

✔ ***Attendance/Academics*** — The Special Education Cooperative Education Program at *Concord High School* (Staten Island) has been successful as a result of the stress placed on attendance and academics and meeting the needs of at-risk students. As a means of providing students with instant gratification in return for their interest and attention, students are able to buy into a stipend- supported program aimed at improving their attendance and class performance. Once students decide to participate in the program, they must maintain program standards. Participants receive hands-on job training under the Special Education Coop Coordinator and are managed by the Custodian or Foods Service Worker. Coop aides work side by side with regularly assigned and supervised custodial or cafeteria staff. Job Managers endorse the program due to the high caliber of work they have come to expect. Students must arrive at school or work on time and be well prepared for the day's business. The principal and teachers encourage pupils to continue their progress through frequent and public recognition of participants' achievements. The program has created a demand for more job slots.

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Grumet, Louis, Executive Director, New York State School Boards Association, 119 Washington Avenue, Albany, New York 12210, (518) 465-3474

Herbert, Victor, Superintendent, The Dropout Prevention Program, New York City Board of Education, BMCC 199 Chamber Street, 5614, New York, New York 10007, (212) 618-1449

Hobart, Thomas, President, New York State United Teachers, 159 Wolf Road, Albany, New York 12212-5008

Maddy-Bernstein, Carolyn, TASPP, University of Illinois, Room 345, Education Building, 1310 South 6th Street, Champaign, Illinois 61820, (217) 333-0807

Massimo, Diane, New York Affiliate, American School Counselors Association, 208 Harris Road, Apt. FA3, Bedford Hills, New York 10507

Matteoni, Louise, New York State Reading Association, 214-16 16th Avenue, Bayside, New York 11360, (718) 780-5892.

Mattera, Gloria, Project Director, National Migrant Dropout Youth Clearinghouse, Holcomb Building, Room 210, Geneseo, New York 14454, (716) 245-5681

Maurer, Richard, Intercept, Anne Durner Middle School, Van Cortlandt Avenue, Ossining, New York 10562, (914) 762-3740

National Center for Research in Vocational Education, University of California at Berkeley, 2150 Shattuck Avenue, Suite 600, Berkeley, California 94704, (415) 642-4004

Pascarelli, Joseph, Director of Training, Research and Evaluation, Governor's School and Business Alliance, 11 West 42nd Street, New York, New York 10036, (212) 790-2490

Smink, Jay, Executive Director, National Dropout Prevention Center, Clemson University, Clemson, South Carolina 29634-5111, (803) 656-2599

Stein, Fred, New York Chapter, National Association of Social

Workers, 14 Brunswick Park Drive, Troy, New York 12180, (518) 279-9895

Walton, Arthur, Deputy Commissioner, Office of School Improvement and Support, Education Building Annex, Room 775, Albany, New York 12234, (518) 474-5915

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